

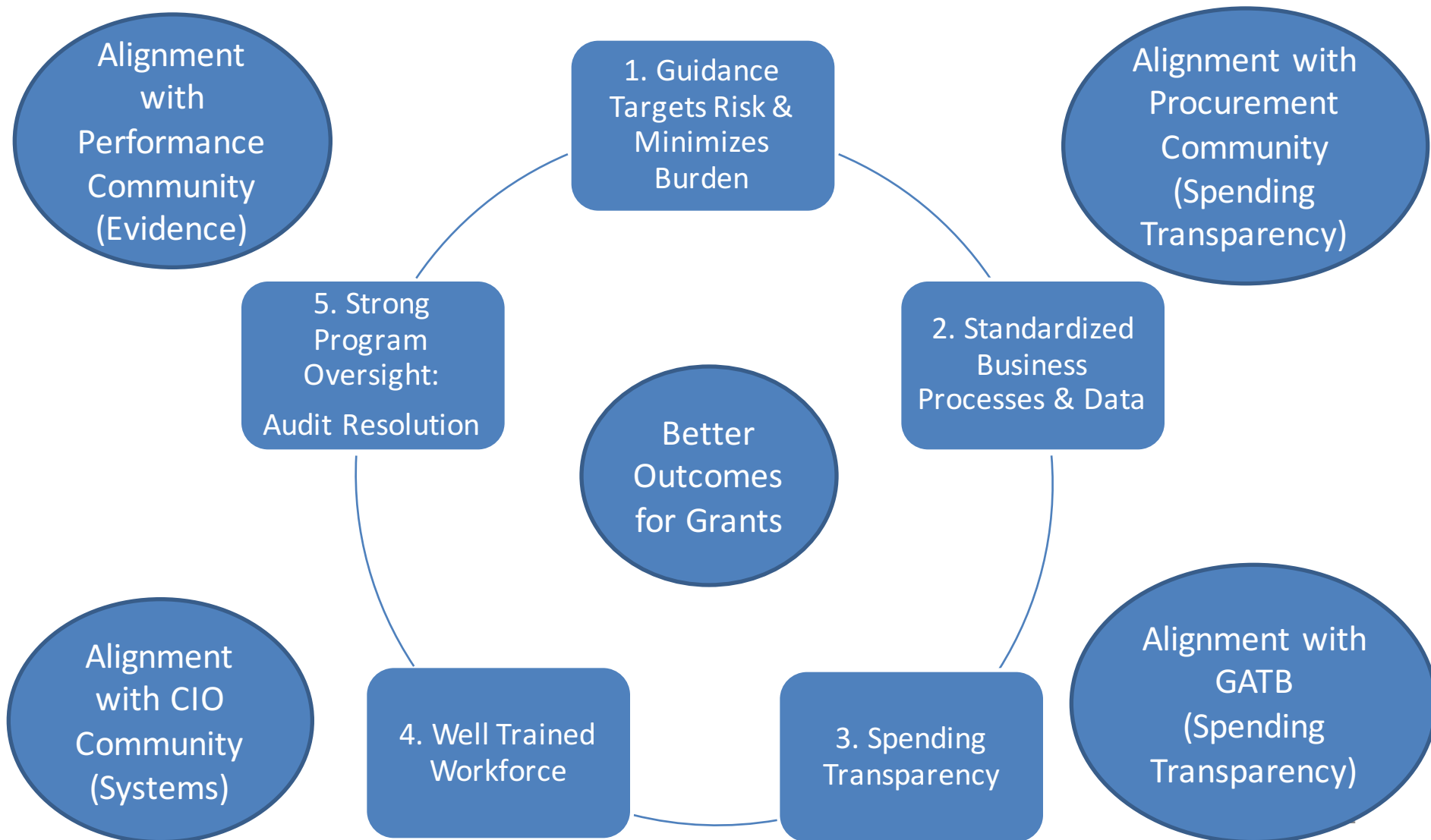
Effective Management of Federal Grant Dollars: Council On Financial Assistance Reform (COFAR) Priorities for FY16-17

Progress Update November 2, 2016

The Council on Financial Assistance Reform was established in 2011 as a governance body to provide policy level leadership for the Federal grants community. For more information please visit cfo.gov/cofar.

COFAR Priorities:

Strong Controls Yield Better Outcomes



Uniform Guidance Implementation

Challenge

- Inconsistent interpretation and implementation of the guidance
- Influx of inquiries regarding the guidance
- Lack of institutionalized process to make updates and changes to Uniform Guidance

FY 2016 – 2017 Accomplishments to Date

- February 2016: Published National Single Audit Coordinators and Key Management Liaisons to the COFAR website
- July 2016: Hosted “Uniform Guidance: Promising Practices in Implementation” Webcast
- August 2016: Posted 2015 Uniform Guidance Administrative Metrics to the COFAR website
- July 2016: Analyzed new data regarding recipient burden and provided final recommendations on proposed changes to the Uniform Guidance
- October 2016: Approved plan to establish transparent process to update the Uniform Guidance and related guidance in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)

Grants Data Standardization

Challenge

- Over 800 distinct grant related OMB-approved information collections
- No current process to vet and validate existing data elements nor to create and validate new data elements
- Inconsistent data element definitions in existing policy and forms

FY 2016 – 2017 Accomplishments to Date

- December 2015: Partnered with USDS and the White House Office of Social Innovation to conduct recipient outreach to identify recipient pain points and provide recommendations
- January 2016: Identified changes needed to existing guidance in 2 CFR to implement DATA Act data standards
- Spring 2016: Continued Section 5 Pilot execution, including identification of participants and data collection
- May 2016: Issued policy guidance on DATA Act standards implementation
- September 2016: Grants workgroup established to streamline and standardize forms
- May 2015 – 2017: Ongoing implementation of DATA Act data standards

Spending Transparency: Framework for Defining “Program”

Challenge

- There are multiple lenses of “program” across the government (e.g. CFDA, A-11 definitions of program activity, Federal program inventory) that do not aggregate transaction level spending into “programmatic areas”
- With respect to the assistance community, the CFDA, which is considered by many as a way to describe assistance “programs”, has no clear guidance to ensure consistent agency establishment of CFDA number
- Opportunity to revisit the purpose of CFDA beyond the statutory requirements and transform it into a modernized tool to make it easier and more intuitive for potential recipients to find Federal resources

FY 2016 – 2017 Accomplishments to Date

- January 2016: Established CFDA policy workgroup
- July 2016: Recommended proposed changes to 2 CFR requiring agencies to align CFDA listings with original authorizing statute
- Summer/Fall 2016: Contributed to cross-community workgroup to help identify federal spending by, purpose, recipient, intended impact, etc.

Workforce Development

Challenge

- Lack of consistent standards for qualifying people to perform the grants management function
- No government-wide core training required of people performing the grants management function

FY 2016 – 2017 Accomplishments to Date

- December 2015: Published Modules 1 and 2 of Grants 101 Course
- April 2016: Published Module 3 of Grants 101 Course
- October 2016: Approved grants management career roadmap project plan

Strong Program Oversight: Audit Resolution

Challenge

- Over 4,000 audited programs failed to receive clean opinions in 2011
- Inconsistent implementation of Uniform Guidance Audit requirements
- Lack of tools to analyze audit data
- Quality of audits

FY 2016 – 2017 Accomplishments to Date

- December 2015: Published 2014 Single Audit Metrics
- March 2016: Began piloting single test to streamline audit reporting as part of the DATA Act Section 5 Pilot
- August 2016: Published 2016 Compliance Supplement